



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 21, 2012, 10:00 p.m. CT

CONTACT
Jen Rae Hein, (402) 429-4701

Gov. Heineman Surveys Fires in North Central Nebraska, Deploys National Guard

(Lincoln, Neb.) Gov. Dave Heineman has activated the State Emergency Operations Plan in response to the fire emergency in Brown and Keya Paha Counties. Earlier today, Gov. Heineman surveyed firsthand the affected areas in north central Nebraska and met with local responders in Ainsworth, Long Pine and Norden.

"I am continually impressed with the hard work of Nebraskans in difficult situations," said Gov. Heineman. "The local communities are working very hard and are supportive of the efforts of local responders and firefighters, including providing aid in the forms of food and water. We will continue to work closely together as we fight these fires."

The Nebraska National Guard continues to mobilize available resources as the response grows. This includes the mobilization of three Nebraska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters equipped with "Bambi buckets" and approximately 28 personnel to provide support to local firefighters fighting a wildfire in Keya Paha and Brown Counties at the request of the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency. The helicopters are equipped with "Bambi buckets" which can scoop water from local sources and place the water where needed by ground firefighters.

The Nebraska National Guard is also preparing to send up to 35 additional ground, red-card certified Nebraska National Guardsmen to support local firefighters if needed.

Resources from the Nebraska State Patrol, Nebraska Department of Roads, the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency and the State Fire Marshal's Office are also responding to the emergency.

At the beginning of this month, Gov. Heineman authorized an emergency declaration for statewide drought and fires that allows state personnel and resources to assist with emergency situations and prevention, and allows maximum flexibility to the state to deploy Nebraska National Guard and Nebraska Emergency Management Agency assets and resources as needed.

The Governor and the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency will continue to monitor the situation throughout the state, as the drought continues.

###